



Service Matters

"Bay Area on the Move"

ABAG Fall General Assembly Joins MTC Transportation 2035 Summit

"Challenges and Choices" for a Bay Area on the move was the theme of the milestone event joining the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) Fall General Assembly with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) Transportation 2035 Summit for the first time in the organization's history. Discussions of a regional vision for linking land use, transportation, and climate change and previews of major Bay Area policy decisions focused the conference proceedings.

Summit moderators, ABAG President and San Jose Vice Mayor Dave Cortese and MTC Commission Chair and Napa County Supervisor Bill Dodd, addressed over 750 members of the public, Bay Area elected officials and staff, regional and state agency directors, and civic, non profit, and private sector leaders. Cortese said, "The Bay Area and its residents face a series of challenges in the next three decades.

As the land use and transportation planning agencies for the Bay Area, it is our responsibility to find solutions to our common problems. ABAG and MTC have joined together today to present choices and gather people's reactions." They jointly added that the summit signified new steps forward linking these policy efforts, addressing climate change challenges, and "starting a new process where land use and transportation policies are truly integrated and where the region works together toward a common goal."

Keynote speaker Dr. Manuel Pastor, a noted author and Director of the Program for Environmental and Regional Equity at the University of Southern California, set the stage for the summit discussion. Capturing the changing demographics of California and the Bay Area, community building, and environmental justice issues, Dr. Manuel Pastor emphasized with humor the need for responsive regional strategies, an innovative economy, policy interventions, and inclusion. He mused, "Change is coming; change is good; but change is not easy and can be messy."

In a joint presentation, Executive Director Henry Gardner and MTC Executive Director Steve Heminger described in point-counterpoint the "Challenges and Choices"

facing the Bay Area. Gardner spoke of challenges from now to 2035 concerning growth, cost of housing and transportation, health, community stability, sustainability, and climate change. Heminger described the kinds of choices



L to R: ABAG President Dave Cortese, San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom, MTC Chair Bill Dodd

Photo: Lawrence Migdale

regarding planning for a

better future, focused growth, target goals, infrastructure, transport pricing, and ways to assess what will make the difference to move the Bay Area forward.

A panel of prominent local elected officials and environmental and business leaders engaged in a lively discussion moderated by ABAG President Dave Cortese and MTC Chair Bill Dodd about the specifics of crafting a regional vision for linking land use, transportation, and climate change. The panel which included Marin County

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"Bay Area on the Move" Summit & Water Crisis

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Supervisor Susan Adams, Oakland Councilmember Jane Brunner, Transportation and Land Use Coalition Executive Director Stuart Cohen, and Silicon Valley Leadership Group CEO and President Carl Guardino suggested

ways to make real progress on challenges like reducing greenhouse gases, cleaning up the air, reducing traffic congestion, and promoting social equity. FOCUS housing along corridors, transportation pricing, gas taxes, and other transit incentives were discussed. They all voiced an overarching respect for the complex tasks ahead and agreed that community involvement and transparent communication from the beginning of all planning was a priority to gain support and insights for land use and transportation policies.

Attendees directly participated through electronic voting with 68% of those attending voting that global warming was "extremely important" in planning for transportation and land use, and 69% willing to pay 25 cents more for a gallon of gasoline if it would limit or reduce global warming. 79% were willing to live in a small home closer to work to reduce the vehicle miles traveled. Attendees also weighed in during breakout session discussions of focused growth and transportation pricing strategies to reduce congestion delay and fuel emissions. They shared their priorities for land-use-transportation policies and investments to accelerate the development of sustainable and livable communities, and improve infrastructure.

Luncheon keynote speaker San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom captured the tenor of the day when he cited the importance of "our roles as environmental stewards,



Clockwise: ABAG Executive Director Henry Gardner, Dr. Manuel Pastor, Breakout Session participants, MTC Executive Director Steve Heminger, Conference Session

Photos: Lawrence Migdale

our green collar future to address climate change with social equity and environmental justice as key components in our collaboration to drive smart change."

ABAG's General Assembly is a bi-

annual conference that brings Bay Area

decision-makers together to explore key issues and trends in a regional context. MTC's Transportation 2035 summit is designed to gather input to the long-range transportation policy and investment blueprint. Joining ABAG and MTC as co-sponsors of this event were the Bay Conservation and Development Commission and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District. Pacific Gas and Electric Company was a corporate gold sponsor with Home Builders Association of Northern California as a bronze sponsor. *All the day's proceedings, including copies of presentations and materials can be found at www.abag.ca.gov/planning or www.mtc.ca.gov where an archived audio cast of all speakers can be heard.*

NEW STATEWIDE EFFORT TO EDUCATE PUBLIC ON WATER CRISIS

Water managers and environmental experts recognize that California's statewide water system is in crisis. But despite intense media coverage and focus by the governor and legislators, the public remains unaware of the state's water problems.

The unrecognized truth is that California is facing serious problems that could ultimately lead to water rationing and reduced supplies throughout the state. That is why the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA), a coalition of 450 public water agencies, has launched a statewide public education program, "California's Water: A Crisis We Can't Ignore." ACWA's multi-faceted public education program has been designed to inform Californians about critical challenges now confronting the state's water supply and delivery system, educating communities about such mounting problems as aging infrastructure, environmental concerns, drought, climate change, and the new pressures associated with California's every-growing population. The program informs the public about the state's growing water crisis through television, radio and print advertising, as well as through the Internet and community outreach. Kicked off in September, the ACWA program will continue through the remainder of 2007. For more information about these resources, visit www.calwatercrisis.org.

CalTrans Environmental Justice Grant Awarded to ABAG

As ABAG and other regional agencies move forward with the long-term planning effort FOCUS, an environmental justice grant has been awarded to ABAG to address the issue of new development and potential displacement. Because promoting environmental justice is an important FOCUS goal, ABAG applied for and has been awarded a \$198,000 grant from CalTrans to identify FOCUS Priority Development Areas where populations are at risk of being priced out as a result of gentrification. The critical concern is low income residents being priced out of neighborhoods due to proposed public investment.

ABAG will collaborate with two other organizations to support the environmental justice needs of low income

communities. ABAG and PolicyLink will frame a set of Equitable Development tools for the Bay Area. The Berkeley Center for Community Innovation and ABAG will also partner with two communities and their city staff to understand their positions and develop policies to stabilize the existing communities while introducing new development. In addition, ABAG plans to hold a regional forum to share policy options and best practices with members in the coming months. *For more information on the FOCUS grant, contact Marisa Cravens, ABAG Regional Planner, at 510/464-7926, marisac@abag.ca.gov; visit <http://www.bayareaevision.org>. For information on the PolicyLink Equitable Development Tool Kit, go to <http://www.policylink.org/EDTK/>*

ABAG's Efforts to Promote Seismic Retrofitting of Residential Buildings

In 1868, the Hayward earthquake caused devastating damage in the East Bay, and additional damage in developed areas of San Francisco and San Jose. The 1868 earthquake occurred when the entire Bay Area population was only 265,000 people – versus 6.7 million today. Similarly, the value of privately-owned residential, commercial, and industrial buildings in 1868 was only a small fraction of its current value of \$1.1 trillion.

Recognizing the probability of another Hayward Earthquake occurring, ABAG staff has taken the USGS (Boatwright) map of the earthquake intensities produced in 1868 and, for the first time, begun the process of overlaying them on maps of 2005 land use and property values. Initial analysis reveals sobering statistics about damaged residential properties and underscores an ongoing concern about the lack of seismic retrofitting of many residential properties. Large older multifamily buildings in dense older urban neighborhoods are also vulnerable. The most problematic are brick (unreinforced masonry) buildings, steel frame buildings with unreinforced masonry walls, and soft-story buildings (those with first floors with large open fronts or open parking on the first floor).

ABAG has been working with cities along the Hayward fault to encourage greater support of private retrofitting efforts, particularly for homeowners, with ABAG staff joining with various groups to offer classes to homeowners on seismic retrofitting. The City of Oakland has followed the lead of the City of Berkeley in offering owners of newly purchased homes a partial rebate of their property transfer tax for seismic retrofit work. ABAG's Financial Services Program has been working with a number of cities, special districts, property owners, and developers to fund seismic retrofit projects. The most recent is the \$11 million taxable bond issuance for the "old" 24-story San Francisco Chronicle building at 690 Market Street – a retrofit of a total of 129 converted office and existing housing units that will supply both market rate and below-market rate housing. ABAG can offer this service and other financial services involving both taxable and non-taxable bonds to others interested in seismic retrofit of large residential buildings located anywhere in the Bay Area. *For more information about mitigation efforts, contact Jeanne Perkins, ABAG Earthquake Preparedness and Hazard Mitigation, 510/464-7934, jeannep@abag.ca.gov.*



*Absence of adequate shear walls on the garage level exacerbated damage to this structure at the corner of Beach and Divisadero Streets, Marina District.
[J.K. Nakata, U.S. Geological Survey]*

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

NOVEMBER 2007

November 15

Legislation & Governmental

Organization Committee 3:30 pm
MetroCenter, ABAG Conference B

Finance & Personnel

Committee 5:00 pm
MetroCenter, ABAG Conference B

ABAG Executive Board 7:00 pm
MetroCenter, Auditorium

November 16

**ABAG / BAAQMD / MTC Joint
Policy Committee** 10:00 am
MetroCenter, Auditorium

November 29

**Census Update Workshop—
A Planners Roadmap to the
2010 Census** 9:00 am
MetroCenter, Auditorium

DECEMBER 2007

December 5

**Regional Planning
Committee (RPC)** 1:00 pm
MetroCenter, Auditorium

December 6

**Greening Infill Best Practices
Conference Series** 8:15 am
Elihu Harris Auditorium,
1515 Clay Street, Oakland

December 12

**ABAG POWER Executive
Committee** 12 Noon
MetroCenter, ABAG Conference B

December 13

**Bay Trail Steering
Committee** 1:30 pm
MetroCenter, ABAG
Conference Room B

“A Planner’s Roadmap to the 2010 Census”

Sponsored by the U.S. Census Bureau

Thursday, November 29th, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter Auditorium, Oakland

ABAG and MTC invite ABAG member cities and counties to attend a free Census Update Workshop and learn from Census Bureau experts how to use American Community Survey (ACS) data; interpret statistics about Bay Area demographics, housing, transportation, and social and economic status; and the “ins and outs” of the 2010 Census. Discuss options for changing census geography for 2010, along with ACS, and the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) required for cities and counties.

View agenda and register: <http://www.abag.ca.gov/abag/events/census>
Contact Patricia Perry, ABAG Senior Regional Planner, at 510-464-7957.

Notable Numbers

Notable Numbers—Bay Area Home Sales

5,014

New and resale houses and condos were sold in the Bay Area this September 2007, the slowest September since 1988.

40 percent

Fewer homes were sold in September 2007, as compared to 8,374 homes sold in September 2006, with sales decreasing year-over-year for the last 32 months.

50 percent

Fewer homes were purchased with jumbo mortgages in September 2007, than in August 2007.

\$2,973

Was the typical monthly mortgage payment that Bay Area buyers committed to paying in September 2007, down from \$3,171 the previous month, and up from \$2,958 a year ago.

\$625,000

Was the median price of all homes purchased in September 2007, a 0.8% increase over September 2006.

*Statistics provided by DataQuick
Information Systems*

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